THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRi RAO BIRENDRA SINGH): (a) A statement showing the month-wise percentage variation in the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) of Pulses, Edible Oils, and other important sale-groups of essentia] commodities such as cereals, vegetables, sugar, *khandsari* and *Gur* from November, 1989 to November, 1990 is given in Annexure *[See* Appendix CLVI, Annexure No. 4].

(b) The Government has accorded highest priority to check the rising trend in prices of essential commodities. Both long term and short term measures are, therefore, being taken for the purpose. The measures taken broadly include steps to increase pro-duct'on of essential commodities, procurement and buffer stocking operations of foodgrains. strengthening Of Public Distribution System, enforcement of the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and other regulatory measures, and augmenting domestic supplies through imports wherever necessary so as to check any abnormal rise in the prices of essential commodities.

The various measures taken by the Government have resulted in checking run-away increase in prices of most of the essential commodities and softening i_n prices of items like rice, gram. *arhar,* potatoes, sugar; *gur vanaspati* and tea etc. in recent weeks.

Closure of Indian Tourist Offices *27.

SHRI MURLIDHAR CHAND-RAKANT BH AND ARE:

SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have re-considered their decision to close down the Indian Tourist Offices abroad in view of the need and Potential for promoting tourism; and

(b) if so, the decision taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI USHA SINHA): (a) and (b) A decision was taken to close the Tourist Offices at Chicago, Singapore, Stockholm and Sydney. This matter was reconsidered and it was decided to continue the Office at Sydney.

उत्तर प्रदेश में बंजर भूमि

*28. **श्री राम नरेश यादव** : क्या कृषि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) उत्तर प्रदेश में कितनी बंजर भूमि है और क्या इसे कृषि योग्य बनाने की कोई योजना सरकार के पास लम्बित है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है और यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं ?

उप प्रधान मंत्री तथा कृषि और पर्यटन मंत्री (श्री देवी लाल) : (क) देश भर में परती भूमि का राज्यवार सर्वेक्षण नहीं किया गया है। लेकिन, अनुमानों के अनुसार उत्तर प्रदेश में परती भूमि का कुल 80.61 लाख हैक्टैयर क्षेत्र उपलब्ध है। जिसमें 14.26 लाख हैक्टैयर खराब वनभूमि शामिल है।

(ख) सरकार निम्नलिखित तीन योजनाओं पर विचार कर रही है, जो कार्य दल द्वारा आठवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के निरूपण हेतु भूमि सुधार एवं विकास सहित भूमि एवं जल उपयोग पर आधारित नियोजन के लिए संस्तुत की गई है।

1. लवण वाली भूमि, समुद्र तटीय लवण वाली भूमि सहित, का सुधार।
2. अम्ल वाली मिट्टी का सुधार।
3. जल से भरे क्षेत्र का परिरक्षण और विकास।

Conversion of Rupsa-Bangriposi Railway Line

*29. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR' SAHU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have taken any decision for the conversion of the narrow-gauge rail line from Rupsa to Baripada and Bangriposi in South Eastern Railway in Orissa; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) and (b) A survey for conversion of Rupsa-Bangriposi N.G. line to B.G, was conducted in 1979. The project was found to yield only 2.43 per cent return and being unremunerative could not be taken up.

Shifting of the Railway Headquarters

*30. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to shift the Headquarters of the South Eastern Railway from Calcutta to Orissa; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Shifting of the Wheat Project Directorate from Delhi

*31. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Wil] the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has taken a decision recently to shift the Wheat Project Directorate from Delhi to Karnal in Haryana; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for taking the decision referred to in part (a) above?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In order to enable the Project Directorate of Wheat to function effectively, it was decided that it should be kept out of the administrative control of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute. It was also felt that the Directorate should be located in an area where wheat is an important crop. Accordingly it was decided to shift the Directorate to Karnal where ICAR land was readily available.

Conversion of M.G. Raiway lines into BG. in Rajastthan

*32. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be-pleased to state,-

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's cons'deration to convert the metre-gauge railway lines into broad-gauge lines in Rajas-than;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the entire State would be covered by broad-gauge railway lines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN-THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS): (a) and (b) The following gauge conversion projects have been sanctioned in Rajasthan;

(i) Bhilai Samdaj-i 222 Km.
and parallei BG from Samdaii to Jodhpur 81 Km ..... 303 km.

(ii) Phulera- Bikaner (1algerh)
and. Merta Road - Jodhpur ■ . . 430 km.

(iii) Sawai Madhopur- Jaiput 132 Km. and parallel BG from Jaipur- Phulera 55 Km. ... 187 Km

920 km

(a) total of 11 gauge conversion projects covering 2118 kms. are in progress in the country out of which 3 projects covering 920 km, are in Rajasthan.

(c) At present there is no plan to totally convert M.G. railway lines into B.G in Rajasthan.